

**Arizona Department of Public Safety**  
**FY15/16 Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Assistance**  
**Pre-application Conference Q & A**

The following document includes the questions and answers from all three VOCA pre-application conferences. The information is organized by topic and only addresses the questions asked – the information provided is not all inclusive of the VOCA guidelines or the instructions from the Web-based Automated Grants System (WAGS). Applicants should still read the guidelines and the instruction screens for a comprehensive understanding of the VOCA program.

**GENERAL VOCA QUESTIONS**

**DPS indicated that there are new proposed Federal VOCA guidelines that have not yet been finalized, but there are guidelines dated 2015 in the Public Forms and Information section of WAGS. Should we use those guidelines?**

Yes. The federal guidelines have not been finalized; however, the DPS/VOCA Guidelines dated August 2015 are the most current state guidelines for the VOCA program.

**When will the final federal performance measures be finalized?**

DPS does not know when the final performance measures will be released, nor does DPS know what changes will be made to the last draft. The federal Office for Victims of Crime is in the process of finalizing this document and hopes to have the final version ready by October 1, 2015.

**DPS indicated that the federal Office of the Inspector General (OIG) will conduct audits at the subgrantee level. What percentage of subgrantees will be audited by OIG? What will be included in the audit and how many years back will the OIG go to audit?**

There is no specific percentage of subgrantees to be audited. The OIG will review the state program and determine which subgrantees will be audited.

The audit will include both financial and programmatic components including items such as internal controls, allowable costs, grant match, match waivers, transition periods between grant cycles, eligible services, and data collection (this is not all inclusive, but a sampling of the items to be audited).

The OIG may audit the prior five years.

**Will DPS/VOCA be auditing indirect costs?**

DPS will be reviewing how the indirect cost rate was applied to ensure the amount paid by the VOCA grant is appropriate. At this point, DPS is waiting for guidance from the federal Office for Victims of Crime regarding whether DPS will be auditing how the indirect cost reimbursement is spent.

**If we are waiting for our cognizant federal agency to approve our indirect cost rate plan, will DPS accept a conditional rate in the interim?**

Yes.

**For grants that allow indirect costs, my county requires that we use the county-approved indirect cost rate. Can I use that rate even if it is higher than the 10% de minimis rate?**

Yes, if the rate used by the county is a federally negotiated rate. If the county's rate is not based on a federally negotiated rate, then the agency is limited to the 10% de minimis rate.

**In the event that the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission's (ACJC) Victim Assistance funding is redirected to another victim services purpose, ACJC told us to apply for VOCA funding for three months in order to bridge the gap between the end of ACJC's grant period and the beginning of the new VOCA grant period (July 1, 2016 – September 30, 2016). Can we request funding for this three-month period?**

Yes, applicants would add a Personnel Budget Detail Worksheet in the Web-based Automated Grants System (WAGS) for the ACJC funded position and request funding for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter only. Applicants would need to explain this in the Budget Justification and Prioritization. Additionally, the grant would be renewed with funding for only three months; therefore, the applicant may have to submit an application outside of the renewal process in order to receive full funding for that position in FY16/17.

**Is there a preference given for early submission of the grant application?**

No.

**Does the VOCA grant review process include an opportunity to provide a "Best and Final"?**

No. DPS awards the VOCA funds through a grant process rather than procurement. We review applications as submitted and do not offer an opportunity to provide additional information.

**Can I contact DPS and ask questions up until the application due date?**

Yes.

**Can I print the application before submitting?**

Yes, utilize the printable versions located in the header for each section of the application.

**If I discover a mistake on my grant application after hitting the submit button, what can I do?**

If you still have time before the due date, send an email to Kate Henderson ([khenderson@azdps.gov](mailto:khenderson@azdps.gov)) and she will unsubmit the application, but remember you must re-submit before the due date.

**Do you recommend writing separate grants for new items or should I include new equipment or expansion costs as part of my usual application that I submit year after year?**

Applicants can submit more than one grant application. To determine whether or not to submit more than one grant application, applicants must evaluate whether they can adequately address all aspects of the proposed project in one submission. If the activities of the project vary widely, i.e. advocacy, therapy, and crisis response, or the new item does not fit within the scope of the project and cannot be adequately addressed in one cohesive application, then it may be necessary to complete more than one application.

**If our agency serves both Native American as well as non-Native American victims, should we prepare two applications?**

Not necessarily. If the applicant can adequately address the needs of both populations within one application, then one application is sufficient. If the needs of the two populations are so distinctive that they cannot be conveyed within one application, then the applicant may want to submit two applications.

**If I include a line item in the application budget that is ineligible, does that make the entire application ineligible?**

No, if the application is recommended for funding by the evaluation team, the ineligible item will not be included in the funding recommendation.

**Since there will be a delay in receiving VOCA funds, should we build our budget based on funding for 9 months only?**

No. The budget should reflect funding for the entire 12-month project period for two reasons – 1) in the event that DPS is authorized to pay subgrantees retroactively back to the beginning of the grant period and 2) to ensure that the renewal application for FY 16/17 covers the cost for the full twelve-month project period.

**If my agency submits multiple applications, will the same review team evaluate all of my applications and how will they know that the applications are linked?**

It is possible that the same evaluators will review all of your applications; however, applications are reviewed individually as stand-alone projects.

**What is supplanting?**

Supplanting occurs when a public (governmental) agency deliberately redirects local (city, county, state) funding for a stated purpose due to the availability of federal funds for that same purpose; thereby reducing the overall amount available for said purpose.

**My agency has a part-time victim notification clerk paid by the city and we want to utilize VOCA funding to increase the position to full-time and pay for benefits – is that supplanting?**

No, because the agency is expanding the program rather than utilizing the VOCA funds to replace the currently available city funds. VOCA can support the increase in hours along with the associated prorated share of fringe benefits.

**Should applicants address whether or not they are supplanting in the application?**

No. It is not necessary to address supplanting in the application. Agencies must ensure that they are not supplanting and be able to demonstrate that supplanting did not occur during an audit.

**Should we submit our Professional and Outside Services contracts with the application?**

No. Successful applicants will be required to submit those contracts along with the DPS/VOCA Subgrant Award Agreement (contract).

**DPS indicated that agencies will be required to post financial statements online – does the Form 990 or a Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) fulfill this requirement?**

Yes.

**Is a 501(c)(3) designation letter adequate to demonstrate an agency's nonprofit status?**

Yes. In addition, along with the VOCA Subgrant Award Agreement (contract), DPS will provide agencies with a list of acceptable methods to demonstrate nonprofit status.

**Who is required to complete the Victims' Rights Training? Is this an annual requirement? Does the training provided by our county attorney's office meet this requirement?**

Victims' Rights training is required for all VOCA and match funded staff along with their direct supervisor. This training requirement applies to both nonprofit and governmental agencies. The training is not required on an annual basis; however, subgrantees should require staff to take the training periodically especially when there are significant changes to the victims' rights laws. The training must be provided by the Arizona Attorney General's Office – training from your local county attorney's office does not fulfill this requirement.

**Who is required to complete the Victim's Compensation Training? Is this an annual requirement?**

Each funded agency must designate a Victim's Compensation Coordinator and that individual is required to complete the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission online Victim's Compensation training. The training is not required on an annual basis; however, the Victim's Compensation Coordinator should take the training periodically especially when there are significant changes to the rules for the Victim's Compensation Program. Since this training is readily available online and fairly brief (less than one hour), DPS recommends that *all* direct service staff and volunteers complete the training.

**Who is required to complete the Civil Rights Training? Is this an annual requirement?**

Each funded agency must designate a Civil Rights Contact Person and that individual is required to complete the Department of Justice – Office for Civil Rights training via the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission website. The training is not required on an annual basis, but rather once per grant cycle.

**If approved for a VOCA project, will we be required to submit demographic information for our entire program or just the VOCA project? Also, will we be required to submit statistics for just the VOCA and match staff?**

Statistics (including demographics) are reported to DPS on a quarterly basis and are based on the victims served and services provided by the VOCA- and match-funded positions as well as volunteers who are utilized as match.

**If we are approved for multiple projects, will the statistics that we report be based on all of the projects combined or will we complete a report for each project?**

Statistics are reported to DPS on a project-by-project basis, i.e. if you have two VOCA-funded projects, you will submit two quarterly program reports.

**Is there a standard list of acronyms that we can reference in our application?**

No. DPS recommends providing the full name/phrase along with the abbreviation in parenthesis the first time it is used; thereafter, the acronym can be used as necessary.

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Numerous questions were asked regarding allowable and non-allowable activities – the following is a breakdown between allowable and non-allowable. (Again this is not all inclusive.)

## **ALLOWABLE SERVICES & ACTIVITIES**

### **Are undocumented immigrant victims eligible for VOCA funded services?**

Yes. VOCA does not distinguish between documented and undocumented immigrant victims.

### **Can VOCA funds be used to assist victims in applying for a U-Visa?**

Yes, this would be considered personal advocacy.

### **Is a person required to file a police report to be considered a victim and eligible for VOCA funded services?**

No. Victims can self identify.

**There seems to be a contradiction in the guidelines. On page 16 under Services, Activities, and Costs at the Subrecipient Level, Immediate Health and Safety, the guidelines indicate that shelter (including emergency, short-term nursing home shelter for elder abuse victims for whom no other safe, short-term residence is available is VOCA eligible; however, on page 25 under Non-Allowable Costs and Activities, the guidelines state that VOCA funds cannot pay for nursing home care, home healthcare costs, etc... Can VOCA funds pay for a stay in a nursing home if there is no alternate placement available?**

VOCA funds can be used for emergency shelter placement in a nursing home on a short-term basis if there is no alternate placement available and no alternate funding to pay for the nursing home stay. VOCA funds can pay for the daily rate; however, additional charges for medical treatment/care while in the nursing home facility are not VOCA eligible.

### **What are the limitations for Emergency Legal Advocacy? In other states, the Order of Protection process includes additional components such as divorce and child custody. Is that allowed in Arizona?**

VOCA funds may be used to assist victims in obtaining an order of protection and in emergency child custody proceedings when there is a concern for the safety of the child. VOCA funds cannot be used for legal representation in divorce, routine child custody, alimony/child support proceedings.

### **Does VOCA require specific credentials for therapists?**

No. DPS expects that agencies will hire professional, qualified therapists who are appropriately trained to serve victims of crime effectively.

**Is victim notification allowable?**

Yes. Victim notification is now a VOCA eligible activity; however, agency's must be cognizant of the prohibition against supplanting local funds with federal dollars.

**Is Outreach allowable?**

The limitation that outreach must only be an occasional duty of a VOCA funded position has been removed. The purpose of Outreach must be to identify victims and subsequently provide them with appropriate services and/or referrals. The outreach can be either in a community setting or in a classroom. Presentations to law enforcement (such as during roll call) regarding an agency's services and how the agency can assist law enforcement are VOCA allowable. However, presentations to boards or executive level audiences when the component of identifying victims in order to provide services is missing are not VOCA eligible.

Prevention is not VOCA allowable.

**Is the prep time for outreach activities VOCA eligible?**

Yes.

**Can VOCA pay advertising costs for outreach events either via traditional media outlets or social media?**

Yes.

**Is an outreach coordinator eligible for VOCA funding?**

Yes. Again, as long as the purpose of the outreach is to identify victims and provide appropriate services and/or referrals.

**Can VOCA funds pay for materials for outreach presentations and travel costs to get to the event location?**

Yes.

**Can we expand an outreach program that is funded by another source utilizing VOCA funds?**

Yes

**Does the VOCA program have to be selected as a major program in order for VOCA funds to support an A-133 Single Audit?**

No. VOCA funds can support a prorated share of the cost of a required single audit. The prorated cost to be charged to VOCA should be based on VOCA's share of the agency's entire victim services budget, i.e. if VOCA funds equate to 10% of the agency's victim services budget, then VOCA could support 10% of the cost of a required single audit.

**Are forensic interviews and forensic examinations VOCA eligible?**

No. VOCA can support enhancement costs to improve services to victims if the applicant can demonstrate that the enhancements are necessary to provide these services and document why the county is not paying for these costs. Enhancements can include equipment, but not medical lab testing.

**Can VOCA funds be used to train a Forensic Nurse Examiner?**

No.

**Can VOCA funds support transportation to a medical facility for a victim?**

Yes. Also, the time for the advocate to escort victim to medical services is eligible.

**Are needs assessments for victims, i.e. intakes, VOCA eligible?**

Yes, assessing the needs of individual victims is an important aspect to successful outcomes for victims. However, keep in mind that community needs assessments and program evaluations are not eligible as these are more administrative in nature.

**Are costs associated with a hotline VOCA eligible?**

Yes, if victim related. If the hotline serves populations other than crime victims, then the costs would need to be prorated.

**Are the salaries for Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Coordinators who support and assist the volunteer CASAs VOCA eligible?**

Yes. OVC recognizes the volunteer coordination activities conducted by CASA Coordinators as VOCA eligible.

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**Allowable and Non-Allowable Costs** (Again this is not all inclusive)

**Does VOCA fund longevity pay, bilingual pay, shift differential, and overtime?**

Yes, longevity, bilingual, and shift differential pay should be calculated into the hourly rate. If a position is not 100% VOCA funded, then any overtime should be spread evenly across all funding sources.

Overtime is accrued after working 40 hours in any given week.

**Is there a cap for VOCA funded salaries?**

No, but salaries should be reasonable for your community's employment market.

**What does ERE (Employee Related Expenses) include?**

ERE can include mandatory fringe benefits such as FICA, unemployment, worker's compensation, as well as voluntary fringe benefits such as health, dental, and life



insurance, long-term disability, retirement (pension and 401(k)), employee assistance program, professional malpractice insurance, etc.

**Can VOCA fund a full-time employee at 100%?**

Yes, as long as 100% of the job duties are VOCA eligible.

**Can VOCA fund exempt positions?**

Yes, however, VOCA does not recognize exempt positions; therefore, these employees must still keep a grant timesheet documenting time worked, leave time, and activities. Overtime is not allowed for exempt employees and only hours delivering direct services to victims are eligible for reimbursement.

**It seems that from the period of October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2016, there are 2096 hours – are we limited to requesting the traditional 2080 hours for a full-time employee?**

No. You may request 2096 hours.

**Will VOCA pay for employee leave?**

Yes, however, for comprehensive guidance regarding personal services and fringe benefits to include leave, agencies should refer to the Uniform Requirements Sections 200.430 and 200.431.

**Is there a maximum number of hours that can be charged to VOCA for the time spent providing supervision of direct service providers?**

No, however, applicants should consider the activities to be performed, i.e. direct services for complex cases, case management assistance with subordinates, etc. along with the number of staff being supervised.

**Can attending collaborator meetings be counted as supervision time?**

No, attendance at collaborator meetings is not a VOCA eligible activity.

**Our agency has mandatory on-call time – can that time be charged to VOCA?**

No, VOCA does not pay for on-call time; however, the actual time called out to provide direct services to a victim can be charged to VOCA.

**If purchasing a piece of equipment, do we need to get bids?**

DPS expects agencies to follow their own procurement policies and procedures and to attempt to get a competitive price. Additionally, agencies should have justification for which vendor was selected.

**Our agency is moving to a building that we have purchased and during the transition, we will have rent at the old location and utilities at both locations – can we charge VOCA for both locations?**

If the agency is providing direct services at both locations and you are prorating the costs, then yes you may charge VOCA.

**We serve victims that are often covered by AHCCCS, but if they are not covered, can we contract for therapy services for them under the VOCA grant?**

Yes, as long as the therapy is addressing their victimization. This would be identified as a Professional and Outside Service in the Budget Section of the application.

**Can we exceed the federal rate for Contracted Services?**

No. The federal rate is the maximum limit; however, not necessarily the value of the service for which your agency is contracting.

**Is the purchase of a wheelchair eligible?**

Typically wheelchairs are considered medical equipment and, therefore, would be ineligible. However, if your project has a unique situation/scenario that can be conveyed in the application, you may request the purchase of a wheelchair for your victim services program (not an individual victim) and the review team will evaluate your justification to determine eligibility.

**My agency holds a victim retreat and we would like to charge a deposit to ensure registrants will attend the event. The deposit will be refunded if the victim attends the event; however, if the victim does not attend, the deposit would not be refunded. Is this acceptable to VOCA?**

No, VOCA cannot support efforts that generate program income. If the deposit is not refunded, that would be considered program income and, therefore, costs associated with the event would be ineligible.

**Can non-VOCA funded employees or volunteers attend training utilizing VOCA funds?**

Yes, VOCA will support training and related travel expenses for direct service providers including VOCA funded and non-VOCA funded staff as well as volunteers.

**If my agency requests a one-time purchase for equipment or advanced technologies, will that dollar amount be renewed for year two as well?**

If a renewal process is held for FY16/17, it is unlikely that the dollar amount associated with a one-time purchase awarded in year one would be renewed for year two.

**Allowable:**

Purchase of a vehicle if used 100% for transportation of victims, transportation of an advocate to provide direct services, and/or outreach efforts (if not 100% dedicated to these purposes, prorate the cost) (no luxury vehicles)

Maintenance and insurance for a VOCA purchased vehicle used for direct services or outreach

Mileage for personal or company owned vehicle to provide direct services or outreach

Travel to provide direct services, i.e. mileage, hotel and per diem if providing services out of town. (Federal travel rates or agency board approved travel rates.) If an agency has a board approved travel rate (whether higher or lower than federal rates), it must be applied uniformly throughout the agency. If an agency's rates are higher than federal rates, the agency should have supporting documentation regarding why the policy rates are higher than federal rates.

Rent and utility costs to provide direct services (must be prorated based on direct service space vs. administrative space)

IT Contractor to upgrade case management system if adequately justified (include under Professional and Outside Services)

Translation services for written materials, interpreter services for oral communication and/or sign language (there is no preferred provider for these services)

Equipment repair and/or replacement in emergency situations (must be prorated if not 100% direct service related)

Minor building modifications to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements if the building is owned by the subrecipient

Office supplies can be purchased specifically for victim services or if stocking a supply closet, then must be prorated

Hotel costs for emergency shelter when appropriate shelter placement is not available

Insurance for a service animal

Beds for a shelter

Cell phone / digital media device service costs if used for providing direct services (there is no cap, but subrecipients are responsible to verify the reimbursement is supported by an actual expense)

Long distance telephone costs if related to providing direct services

Electronic medical records system (prorated for VOCA portion)

Upgrading database/case management system if applicant can relate the benefit to the victim (see criteria on page 22 of the guidelines)

Mileage for transportation to and from medical appointments

**Not Allowable:**

Personal vehicle insurance and maintenance even if used for direct services (mileage can be charged which is designed to cover a portion of those costs)

State bar dues for attorneys

Mortgage payments (cannot be used as match either)

First and last month's rent and utilities for a victim

Property liability insurance

Medical costs

Costs to relocate a crime victim to a new residence or alternate location

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**Match**

**If we have multiple applications, does the 20% match apply to all and can we use the same items as match?**

Yes, the 20% match requirement applies to each application individually.

No, you may not use the same line items as match for multiple projects.

**Does requesting a match waiver hurt our chances for receiving a grant?**

No.

**Can we ask for a match waiver later in the grant period?**

If you anticipate needing a match waiver, it should be requested at the time of application. If at some future date, you do not receive a grant or donation that you anticipated utilizing as match and have difficulty identifying an alternate source, you should contact your DPS Grant Coordinator to discuss options.

**What is the turnaround time for receiving a match waiver?**

This is beyond DPS' control as the match waivers are approved at the federal level, but our understanding is that match waivers are typically granted or denied within a three week timeframe.

**Is the match waiver for the whole project period?**

The match waiver is not based on a specific time period, but rather is based on the specific dollar amount of the waiver.

**Will requesting a match waiver delay the project start date?**

No. Programs can start the project and then once the match waiver is granted or denied, adjustments to the award can be made.

**If we currently use ACJC as match and that funding stream is eliminated, how do we meet our match requirement?**

In this scenario, agencies will need to review their budget to identify alternate sources of funding that can be utilized as match. Agencies should contact their DPS Grant Coordinator immediately if this situation occurs (whether it occurs with ACJC or any other funding source being used as match.)

**Do you have to meet match requirement month by month?**

The match is typically reported month by month; however, agencies are permitted to meet the match requirement early in the project period. Agencies are not permitted to delay reporting match as this may result in completing the grant period without having adequate match.

**Does it help to overmatch?**

No, in fact WAGS will not allow you to enter more match than what is required.

**If I'm not at the proper 80/20 split for VOCA and match funds, can I go back into the application to make necessary changes?**

Yes, you can log back in to make necessary changes until you hit the "submit" button, but remember to hit the save button prior to exiting any screen. WAGS will not let you submit your application until the required 80/20 split is achieved.

**Since there will be a delay in receiving notice for the grant award, can the period before the contract is fully executed be used as match?**

Yes.

**Can federal dollars that are passed through a state agency be used as match? The Department of Child Safety provides funding to our agency, but the distribution from their various sources of funding, i.e. state or federal, is based on each individual child. How can we identify the federal vs. the state in order to use as match?**

First, federal dollars passed through a state agency are not eligible to be used as match. Secondly, the process of identifying which dollars in your scenario are federal

vs. which dollars are state sounds extremely cumbersome; therefore, you may want to identify alternate sources of match.

**Can indirect costs be used as match?**

No.

**We contract some of our administrative functions, i.e. payroll, can VOCA pay for this or can we use this as match?**

No. In order for a line item to be eligible for match, it has to be eligible to be funded with VOCA dollars. Additionally, administrative activities as described are not VOCA eligible.

**Can we use volunteers to meet the match requirement?**

Yes, volunteers can be used to meet the match requirement if they are providing VOCA eligible direct services to crime victims. In the event that volunteers are used as match, their time and activities must be documented in the same manner as a paid employee.

**Can a city funded advocate be used as match?**

Yes, as long as the salary is paid by a non-federal source and the advocate provides VOCA eligible direct services to crime victims.

**Can on-call time be used as match?**

Yes, agencies can value on-call time at \$2/hour for match purposes; however, on-call time cannot be funded with VOCA dollars.

**If an on-call person is actually called out or answers a hotline call, can the direct service time (whether in person or via hotline) be used as match?**

Yes, the direct service time can be used as match and can be valued at the regular volunteer rate (rather than the on-call \$2/hour rate).

**Can a victim notification clerk be used as match?**

Yes, as long as the funding source is not federal and the position provides direct victim services.

**Are the rules the same for match and VOCA as it relates to allowable costs?**

Yes; however, there are some exceptions which are included in the DPS-VOCA guidelines.

**Can VOCA pay for our mortgage or can we use the mortgage payment as match?**

No, VOCA cannot support mortgage payments.

**I work closely with an agency that provides services to my victims – can I count their time providing services as match?**

No. Match must be provided within your organization's budget or activities.

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### **Eligibility Requirements for Subrecipients**

**VOCA requires subrecipients to have a volunteer program – is there a minimum number of hours required to meet this eligibility requirement?**

No, not to meet the eligibility requirement. However, if using volunteers as match, agencies will need to have an adequate pool of direct service volunteers to meet the match requirement.

**If we use college interns, is that considered a volunteer program?**

Yes.

**Our agency has a “volunteer” Board of Directors – does that meet the “volunteer program” requirement?**

No. Having volunteer board members does not constitute having a volunteer program.

**If a person is victimized in another state and then subsequently moves to Arizona, are they eligible for VOCA funded services? Are they eligible for Victim's Compensation?**

Yes, VOCA funds provide services to crime victims regardless of where the crime occurred.

No, typically Victim's Compensation applies to crimes committed within Arizona. For the purposes of receiving Victim's Compensation, an individual victimized in another state would need to contact the Victim's Compensation program in that state.

**Our organization refers victims to the Victim's Compensation program in our county – does that meet the eligibility requirement that we “help victims apply for compensation benefits”?**

No. Organizations must be familiar enough with victims compensation to notify victims of the program as well as assist them with completing an application.

**The children in our facility are usually part of the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS), are they eligible for victim's compensation benefits?**

Contact the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (ACJC) for clarification.

**Our organization does not typically encounter federal victims of crime, how would we meet the eligibility requirement to “provide services to victims of federal crimes”?**

In the event that you do encounter federal crime victims, your organization would have to be willing to assist them either in house or by connecting them with the relevant federal victim services program.

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## **Web-based Automated Grants System (WAGS)**

### General WAGS questions

**WAGS has character limitations on the narrative screens – do spaces count?  
Also does WAGS have spell check?**

Yes, spaces are included in the character count.

No, there is no spell check in WAGS.

DPS recommends typing narratives in a word processing type program to enable applicants to check spelling and monitor the character count.

**Is a specific Internet browser required for WAGS?**

No, WAGS should work with most internet browsers. If you need technical assistance, contact Kate Henderson.

**What is wrong with cutting and pasting from one application to another?**

If two internet browser windows are open to WAGS on the same computer at the same time or if two individuals are working on the same screen on different computers at the same time, database table errors will occur in WAGS. This results in corruption of the data in the application (and possibly in your current agreement). DPS cannot resolve this issue in-house – we must request assistance from our WAGS developer.

Because DPS must rely on an outside vendor (who may have other priorities), applicants will be instructed to pull a new application and start over.

If an applicant wants to cut and paste, the following steps must be followed. Open WAGS in one browser window and cut and paste into a word processing program. Then close WAGS and complete the edits in the word processing program. Once edits are complete, open WAGS again and copy from the word processing program into WAGS. This will eliminate the risk of corrupting data and the likelihood of having to start over.



### **Is there a time limit for working in WAGS?**

The WAGS system is built with a feature that will **log you off after 45 minutes** if there is no activity during the open session. Simply typing in the narrative boxes does not “transmit” activity to WAGS, but navigation between screens and saving does require your computer to “talk” to the database, therefore registering as activity, and resetting your clock. Remember, when the system logs you off, it will do so without saving! To protect your work, save and save often!

### **Can we use bullets when typing our narrative in WAGS?**

WAGS does not recognize special characters – in fact, it will display as random characters that can confuse the evaluator. Spacing in the printable version of the application is not representative of the spacing you can see on the screen, i.e. returns at the end of a paragraph do not translate to a blank line between paragraphs. Regardless of the number of returns/spaces, text will run together into one long paragraph; therefore, if the writer has the available space and wishes to convey a new paragraph, using three forward slashes (///) between paragraphs can provide separation between topics.

### **Are scores and comments from prior applications available in WAGS?**

Yes. To access this information, log into WAGS and select your application from a previous open and competitive grant process. In the bottom right corner, there will be a link to the Review Summary and the Budget Recommendation.

#### Forms Section: Agency Service Information

### **When identifying the victim population to be served, how do I reflect child neglect, children who witness domestic violence, teen dating violence, victims of labor trafficking and victims of sex trafficking?**

Child neglect victims should be identified as child physical abuse.

Children who witness domestic violence should be identified under domestic violence.

Teen dating violence should be identified under domestic violence. (This may change in the future pending guidance from the Office for Victims of Crime.)

Victims of labor trafficking should be identified as Other – Labor Trafficking.

Identifying victims of sex trafficking depends on your project focus. If the project focus is sex trafficking, then identify the population to be served as Other – Sex Trafficking. If the project focus is sexual assault or child sexual abuse and the project may occasionally provide services to victims of sex trafficking, then identify the population to be served as Adult Sexual Assault or Child Sexual Abuse.

**My agency is a domestic violence service provider, but occasionally we provide services to other victim types, should I reflect the other victim types when identifying the victim population to be served?**

If the other populations reflect a significant portion of the victims that your agency serves, then select those victim populations as well. If your agency only encounters victims other than those presenting as DV victims on an occasional basis, then you do not have to select those victim populations.

**If my agency is applying for more than one project, do we reflect the services provided by the entire agency or should we select those services to be provided by the specific project?**

Select the services to be provided by the specific project. Each application should be project specific.

Forms Section: Jurisdiction

**Please explain again the difference between the circles, squares, and Congressional Districts.**

For a complete explanation, please review the instructions screen for the Jurisdiction section.

Forms Section: Prorate VOCA Project Funds

**How do we determine the percentage to reflect if initially the victimization type is child physical abuse, but later we determine it is child sexual abuse?**

The percentages reflected in this section should be projections based on the actual number of victims served last year through the VOCA project or if the project is new or an expansion, the number of victims your agency anticipates serving through the proposed VOCA project.

For example:

If a DPS-VOCA funded employee specializes in providing assistance to a particular type of victim, but the agency provides assistance to numerous types of victims, the agency-wide statistics will be different from those for the DPS-VOCA project.

If the project has not previously been funded by DPS-VOCA or if it is being expanded, calculate the percentages based upon realistic projections for the specific victim population(s) the project will be serving.

#### Forms Section: Source of Funding

**We are a current recipient of VOCA funds and the Source of Funding screen automatically populates the FY15 VOCA award amount; however, it is for a 15-month time period. Can we change this to reflect the 12-month budget?**

No, this cannot be changed, but the evaluators will know that this figure represents 15 months rather than 12.

**Can we list grants that we have applied for, but not yet received in our FY16 projection?**

Yes, the FY16 column is meant to be a projection of your anticipated victim services budget. The FY15 column is meant to be based on your actual victim services budget for the time frame identified.

**Our entire agency is focused only on victim services – do we reflect our entire budget?**

Yes.

**What if 25% of our general fund is for victim services and the other 75% is for a non-victim services purpose – what should we report?**

Report the portion of funding that is directed toward your victim services program. In this example, 25% of the general fund would be listed on the Source of Funding screen.

#### Narratives Section: Victim Services Summary

**Should the statistics presented in the Victim Statistics section correspond to the Victim Types identified in the Agency Service Information screen?**

For the most part, yes the figures should reflect the populations identified previously; however, if, on occasion, a victim receives assistance that falls outside of the typical population served by your agency, it is not necessary to reflect that victim type in the Agency Service Information screen.

#### Narratives Section: Interagency Coordination

**Can we list another VOCA recipient as one of our interagency partners?**

Yes.

**We work closely with local police officers who complete lethality assessments for domestic violence victims and refer them to us for services. Can we include the police department as an interagency partner?**

Yes.

### **Can we list adult probation as an interagency partner?**

Yes.

#### Narratives Section: Community Collaboration

### **What are some examples of community efforts to improve victim services?**

Coalitions, task forces, and fatality review boards are often involved in protocol development and system evaluation. These efforts often improve the quality of victim services within a community or the state; however these activities are typically not VOCA eligible, but rather are an eligibility requirement to receive VOCA funds.

#### Narratives Section: Performance Measures

### **Are these performance measures what we will be required to report on if awarded VOCA funds?**

Yes. Agencies will be required to report performance measures data in the quarterly program report.

### **My governmental program provides services to all types of victims – is Victim/Witness the appropriate Project Focus.**

Selecting a project focus is the first step in developing performance measures – agencies should select the focus that best represents their project. If your agency is a governmental agency which serves all types of victims, then Victim/Witness is most likely the focus that best represents your project.

### **Do I have to select all four goals?**

No, applicants should select the goal or goals that are relevant to the proposed project.

### **Our agency has predetermined goals for our program. Can we use those goals instead of the VOCA goals and can we develop our own core measures?**

No, only the four VOCA goals can be used; however, applicants are encouraged to align their agency goals with the predetermined VOCA goals. VOCA has specific required core measures for child abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, and victim/witness programs that must be utilized if your agency selects one of those victimization types as your project focus; however, applicants can integrate established agency outcomes with the required core outcomes in order to develop a cohesive set of measures.

If an applicant selects Other as a project focus, there are no predetermined core measures and the applicant will be required to develop their own set of performance measures. DPS recommends reviewing the core measures for the other victimization types and customizing those measures to your project.

**Do we use data from last fiscal year to project our numbers for the FY16 project?**

Yes.

Budget Section: Salaries and Wages

**If we are requesting a new position or a position is not currently filled, how do we reflect the individual's name?**

Enter Vacant in both the first name and last name fields.

**If my agency has two people in the same position, do I enter a position description for each?**

Yes. WAGS must reflect each individual that will be charged to the grant, i.e. if two people are filling one position, a Personnel Budget Detail Worksheet (PBDW) must be created for each VOCA- or match-funded person.

Additionally, if an agency is requesting funding for three advocates, each of the advocate positions must be identified separately.

**When completing the position description, should we include 100% of the job duties even if some are not related to the VOCA project?**

Yes, the position description should reflect all (100%) of the duties/activities of the VOCA- or match-funded position whether VOCA eligible or not.

**If we are applying for overtime, are we required to have two PBDW's for each position?**

Yes, each position that will work overtime must have two PBDW's because agencies must indicate the number of overtime hours as well as the overtime rate for that specific individual.

(Note: if your agency is requesting funding for numerous positions that will be working overtime, you may contact Kate Henderson to determine whether or not there is an acceptable alternative to having two PBDW's for each position.)

**When using volunteers as match, do we have to list each volunteer individually?**

No. Agencies will want to categorize volunteers based on the activity performed, i.e. Volunteer Advocates, Volunteer Crisis Responders, Intern Counselors, etc

Budget Section: Professional and Outside Services

**My agency is going to request Professional and Outside Services (POS); however, we do not know the name of the contractor at this time – how should we reflect this in the POS – Contractor Information screen?**

Use the acronym TBD (to be determined).

**Can the same individual be paid as a POS contractor and used as a volunteer?**

Yes. The services that will be paid should be listed in the POS section and the services that will be considered volunteer time should be listed in the volunteer section.

**Can a “contract” counselor be paid more than a staff counselor?**

Yes, the difference in hourly rates should be addressed in the Budget Prioritization and Justification (BP&J). The POS limitations set by the federal government are “limitations” not necessarily the value of the service provided. Applicants should research the value of services within their community.

**Can we use the excess from a \$110 paid rate for a POS counselor as cash match?**

No.

**Can we use a \$110 in-kind rate for a volunteer counselor?**

Yes, if your agency employs counselors at that rate. If your agency does not employ counselors and would need to obtain these services via a Professional and Outside Services contract, then you are subject to the hourly rate limit as set by the federal government. (Note: hourly rate limit is \$81.25 or \$650 per day.)

Budget Section: Other Operating Expenses

**If requesting utilities as a VOCA funded line item or as a match line item, should we identify the various utilities individually?**

Yes. Applicants should list them separately, i.e. electricity, telephone, water, etc.

**When requesting Emergency Financial Assistance, should we list each specific category in the budget section or just combine into one line item?**

Request Emergency Financial Assistance as a lump sum in the budget section; however, in the BP&J, applicants should identify in detail the specific types of emergency expenses to be paid with VOCA funds or used as match.

**Do I request a laptop under Equipment or Other Operating?**

Other Operating. Equipment is utilized for items that cost \$5,000 or more.

Budget Section: Match

**If we need a match waiver, how is that to be reflected in our WAGS budget?**

Go to the Other Operating Expenses screen, enter Match Waiver under “Other Expenses”, enter “1” for number of months, select Cash radio button and enter the amount of the waiver request in the Match Amount column.

Budget Section: Budget Prioritization and Justification

**Is it valid to assume that if a line item is not addressed in the BP&J, it will not be funded?**

If it is a minor omission, i.e. a fringe benefit line item, it will likely still be funded; however, if it is a major purchase or a significant share of the budget with no supporting justification, then it will likely not be recommended for funding.